DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 456 348 CG 031 107

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TITLE	Living Free: A Teacher Information Booklet.
PUB DATE	1992-00-00
NOTE	15p.; Designed for use in conjunction with "Singing in the Darkness: A Journey through Addiction," a performance written by Rick Adam, not available through ERIC.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Learner (051) -- Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Adolescents; Autobiographies; Drug Addiction; *Drug Education; Elementary Secondary Education; Prevention; Responsibility; Self Actualization; *Self Help Programs; Skits; Substance Abuse

ABSTRACT

This workbook helps adolescents learn how to take charge of their own lives and happiness. The underlying idea is to teach them how to live responsibly. By learning to live responsibly, adolescents have the best chance of avoiding drugs, alcohol, and other addictive behaviors such as overeating and overspending. The workbook explains the steps to healthy behaviors, which include creative problem solving and participating in enjoyable activities. It accompanies an autobiographical informational performance based on the life story of one man's journey from addiction. The performance describes his high school years when he suffered from overeating, addiction, and problems with a dysfunctional family and how he turned his life around with music and performing. The workbook can be used in conjunction with or independent of the performance. It includes surveys that students can take independently to assess their problem with addiction or eating disorders. It provides tips on living drug-free and contains skits that adolescents can act out to help generate awareness and discussion about substance abuse. A list of books and organizations that help with addiction prevention are included. (JDM)

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LIVING FREE

A Teacher Information Booklet

Designed for use
in conjunction with

**"Singing in the Darkness:
A Journey Through Addiction"**

***A performance written
and presented by Rick Adam***

***Workbook written
and edited by Robin Mello
M.S.Ed***

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Living Free

A Teacher Information Booklet

Designed for use in conjuction with
"Singing in the Darkness: A Journey Through Addiction"
a performance written and presented by Rick Adam

Workbook written and edited by Robin Mello, M.S.Ed.

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To The Teacher:

"Singing in the Darkness" is an *informance*, i.e. an autobiographical informational performance. It was designed to present students with a personal look at the difficulties involved in drug and alcohol abuse, food addictions, co-dependent behavior, and dysfunctional family dynamics. It is the story of Rick Adam's own personal journey through drug dependency into recovery and beyond. The show and the follow-up workshops are designed to give students an idea of how to access information on this subject. This program teaches students how to overcome negative internal messages and how to set and attain life goals.

Some of the major content covered in this *informance* are:

* Solving Problems Creatively
* Mapping Personal Goals
* Making Healthy Choices
* Building Self-Esteem
* Positive Self-Imaging
* Peer Counseling

Students become involved in making healthy life choices and are given a chance to participate in group activities designed to enhance their self-expression, communication, self-awareness, and creativity.

This booklet can be used before and after the performance/ workshop.It can also be used independent of any performance or artist visit. Much of the information listed here is designed to be copied and presented directly to students.

Questions often come up during discussions. We recommend a counselor or similar professional be available for any students who might feel the need for a more in-depth perspective on this topic.

To The Student:

The title of this book is 'Living Free'. 'Living Free' means taking charge of your own happiness and life style. 'Living Free' means acting responsibly. 'Living Free' means saying "NO" to drugs, alcohol, and other addictive behaviors such as overeating and overspending. It means saying "YES" to solving problems creatively, doing activities that make you feel good about yourself.

The performance you have just seen is the real life story of Rick Adam's journey through addiction. Twenty years ago Rick Adam was 229 lbs., in high school, and living in an addicted and dysfunctional family. He taught himself to cope with these problems, and overcame his own negative, internal messages. Rick learned how to lose weight. He put a halt to his addictive behavior and drug addiction. He said "YES"to life. More importantly, he said "YES"to his own creativity. He taught himself to map out his personal goals, he learned to play guitar, to juggle, to walk on stilts. He became a composer and performer. Rick has been keeping his life in balance ever since by performing, teaching, and creating vaudeville style theater.

Here's a way to think about living free. Give yourself this survey. No one else has to see it or read it. It's for your information only. Please be as honest with yourself as you can.

Do you have a problem with alcohol?

1. Do you drink alcohol?

2. Do you drink alcohol when you want to forget problems, when you are feeling lonely, or to be part of the crowd?

3. Have you ever had a black-out or forgotten events when you were drinking?

4. Does anyone in your immediate family have a drinking problem?

5. Do you ever drink to overcome a hangover, or drink until you get sick?

6. Does your drinking interfere with your responsibilities? Have you ever missed school because you were drinking?

FACT: 4.6 million teenagers have a drinking problem.

If you answered YES to three or more of these questions, if you have black-outs, memory loss, or if you drink to get rid of a hangover you may have a drinking problem. To get help refer to the phone numbers at the end of this booklet, or talk to someone you can trust like a counselor, teacher, or social worker.

Do you have a problem with food?

1. Do you constantly think about "feeling fat?"

2. Do you use food as a reward or punishment for things you have done?

3. Do you feel guilt or shame after you eat, or do you hide food and/or eat in secret so no one will find out?

4. Do you fast, and then binge?

5. Do you ever force yourself to vomit after you have eaten?

FACT: A Gallop poll has found that 37% of teenagers in the U.S.A. binge on food. 18% of all teenagers have an eating disorder such as Bulimia Nervosa, Anorexia Nervosa, or Compulsive Overeating.

If you answered YES to three or more of these questions there is a good chance that you might be 'at risk' when it comes to eating habits. Habits can be changed. The books and other information listed at the end of this booklet may help.

Some definitions:

Bulimia Nervosa: A person who has Bulimia eats compulisively, and then will often force him or herself to vomit afterward. Sometimes a bulimic person will go on strict diets, fasts, and exercise programs. Without help a bulimic person usually repeats this pattern over and over again. Bulimia can be a fatal condition. Many times a bulimic person has a very low self image.

Anorexia Nervosa: A person who has Anorexia has an obsession with being thin. Anorexic people starve themselves and often take huge amounts of laxatives or diuretics. Anorexic people often become malnorished. Anoexia was once thought to be a disease only young women had, now we know that young men also have this condition. Anorexia is a disease that can be fatal.

Compulsive Overeater: A person who is a compulsive overeater is unable to control their eating behavior. The often eat huge amounts of food, then diet, then eat again , then go back to dieting. Their weight goes up and down in a 'see-saw effect' that often results in medical problems.

Do you have a problem with drugs?

1. Do you often go along with what your friends want to do even if you don't feel that you should?

2. Do you smoke cigarettes?

3. Do any of your friends, or any one in your family, have a problem with drugs?

4. Do you take drugs, or have you ever experimented with drugs?

5. Have you ever felt guilty about taking drugs?

6. Do you ever use drugs because 'everyone else is doing it'?

7. Have you ever lied about having drugs in your possession?

8. Have you ever missed school or work because of drug use?

9. Have you ever stolen money to get drugs?

10. Have you ever tried to stop taking drugs but couldn't?

Fact: 1 out of every 16 high school students smoke marijuana daily. Lots of kids smoke the drug PCP (Angel Dust), because they think it's pot. Angel Dust, Cocaine, and Heroine can kill you the first time you try it. Most people who use drugs for recreation end up with health problems, legal and financial problems, and family difficulties. Drug use can fatal.

If you answered YES to three or more of the questions on this survey you may be at risk, or need drug counseling. It's up to you to help yourself, and it is as simple as talking with a counselor, minister, teacher, or an adult you trust. You may also want to call the National Institute on Drug Abuse's Hot Line at ***1-800-662-4357****.*

Brain Storm

We've been talking a lot about 'living free', changing our addictive habits, and taking care of ourselves. You might have found out that you are not addicted to drugs, that you are already 'living free'. Congratulations! You care about yourself. Keep up the good work! Many people go through life drug and alcohol free.

The people we call 'at risk' behave in addictive ways. These people often drink, over eat, or take drugs because they feel sad,fearful, or angry. Very often people 'at risk' live in families who assist them in their addictive behavior. Many family members pretend not to notice that there is a problem. Some families have a history of alcoholism or drug addiction. In these families talking honestly is often difficult, and quite often one or more family members becomes a scapegoat taking the blame, or the brunt of the anger when things go wrong. This kind of family relationship is often labeled 'dysfunctional' and 'co-dependent'. Co-dependency and addictions often go together.

To get clean and clear is one of the most important things you can do for yourself. On the next page is a list of suggestions on how to get free and how to 'live free'. People have thought of these solutions for you, but before you turn to the next page, we'd like the class to brainstorm together.

We suggest that you try to think of as many solutions to these questions:

1) What advice would you give to a friend who told you they thought they had a drug or alcohol problem?

2) How would <u>you</u> go about living a drug free life?

Make a list of any and all possible answers to these questions. You may want to circle the answers that seem the best. You may want to write some of these ideas into an article for your local newspaper. You might find that some ideas make good slogans for posters for the school walls. Some of you may even want to create your own peer discussion 'brainstorming' group for problems and questions as they arise.

All around the country students are living free. Here are some 'say no to addiction' projects that students like yourself have produced:

* Video Tapes with a 'say no' theme.
* Newspaper articles: published in local and national papers.
* Books, with real life stories. Some are published nationally.
* Rap songs: music with a message.
* Radio and TV commercials: many are run on local stations as a public service.
* Project Graduation: chemical free celebrations are popular across the country.
* Chemical free parties and dances: It's not just for prom night any more.
* Peer Counseling groups: most schools have peer groups already in session.

How do you think you might want to get involved? What projects could you create?

Tips on 'Living Free'

* Hang out with friends who are drug, tobacco, and alcohol free.

* Get involved in an activity that uses your skills and knowledge. This can be as simple as snapping a photograph or as complicated as learning a new language.

* Talk things out. Talking about your feelings, and being open about your opinions can make you feel more worth while. It will also give people a chance to get to know you better.

* Know when to ask for help or assistance. No one can do everything all alone. Look around for a counselor, teacher, minister, aunt, uncle, or an older brother/sister with whom you can talk. Use the toll free hot lines we've listed at the back of this book. Keep trying until you get it right.

*Get the facts, and get the real facts. If you have questions about drugs, alcohol, sexuality, or self-image find out the real story. Don't rely on hearsay and gossip.

*Keep a journal of your thoughts and feelings. It helps. Who knows you just may end up being a famous author someday!

* Remember to put yourself first. If you are uncomfortable in any situation whatsoever, take charge. Don't be afraid to ask for what you need. Be your own best friend.

* Find a 'self-help' group. Groups like Alcoholics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, and Al-A-Teen, have some of the highest success rates in assisting people in overcoming addictions.

* Spend time with people who care about you, and whom you care for. A family can be a real help in tough times.

* Get involved with helping others.Volunteer some time at a food bank, a political campaign, or a shelter for homeless persons. You may want to help at a child care center, an after-school recreation program, or at your local library.

* Move your body! Get out and dance, skate, ski, run, bike, or play team sports. You'll feel better emotionally as well as physically.

* Give yourself private and quiet time away from school, work, family, or friends. Get to know the person you are going to be spending the rest of your life with -YOU! Learn to like yourself for who you are.

* Become an artist or a musician. Join a group. Learn to draw, act, juggle, unicycle, sing, etc. etc.

* Be kind to yourself, and know that everything takes time- including growing up. Even teachers continue to grow. Everyone is in the process of learning about life.

* Remind yourselt that it is OK to make mistakes. A mistake is only a failure if it stops you permanently from accomplishing your goal.

* Never drink and drive.

* Never take drugs and drive.

Open Ended Plays

An open ended play is a 'What If?' experiment. On the next few pages you will find some scenes which have been begun but do not (as yet) have an ending. You will be asked to get into small discussion groups. Your group will need to select one of the plays to work on. Read the parts out loud. It is up to you and your group to decide upon an ending for the scene you have chosen. You might want to act things out first to see how your dialogue sounds, or you may want to write things down and have another group perform your play. Have fun, and see what you can come up with. Remember: there is no correct ending to any of these productions.

New Kid In Town

Cast of Characters:
Andrea: *a cheerleader*
Maxi: *her best friend*
Sara: *a shy girl who is new in town.*
Doug: *Andrea's boyfriend*
Rafael: *Doug's friend, and a basketball player.*
Kids at the dance

The Scene: A Friday evening at the high school gym. There are decorations on the walls, a rock band is tuning up, and people are starting to arrive for the dance. The event is being put on to celebrate the basketball team's victory in the All State Finals.

Andrea and Maxi enter the gym, they are all dressed up and excited, they see Sara standing around looking lost and uncomfortable.

Andrea: Look Maxi there's that new girl who's in my Math class.

Maxi: Oh, yeah! The girl over there with the blue sweater? I've seen her around, I heard she just moved into town. I think I saw her in study hall the other day.

Andrea: Hi, you're in Mr. Stack's math class aren't you?

Sara: Oh, hi, I'm Sara.

Andrea: I'm Andrea, my friends call me Andy.

Maxi: I'm Maxi- my mom calls me Maxine-yuck! I hate that name.

Sara: I know what you mean about names, my full name is Sara Grace, and my ten year old brother is always calling me Sour Face.

Andrea (*laughing*): Oh I've got a younger brother- boy what a pest, you know the other day.....

The girls are interrupted by the arrival of two boys- Doug and Rafael

Doug: Hey, Andrea I've been looking all over for you, Hi Maxi.

Maxi: Hey Rafael- great game today, congratulations.

Rafael: Yeah, glad that's over with though, I'm going to do nothing but be a couch potatoe for the next week- VACATION!

Doug: Say, aren't you the new kid who moved into the old Tucker place?

Sara (*embarrassed)*: yeah.

Andrea: Sara, this is Rafael and Doug.

Doug (*whispering*): Listen, Andy, I've got a couple of six packs stashed under the seat of my car- out back, what do you say we get out of here, drive down to the beach? Come on Maxi ? You too Sara.

Andrea: I don't know, you remember what happened the last time Doug? I was grounded for a week.

Rafael: Oh come on, It'll be fun, who wants to hang around at this stupid dance? What do you say?

WHAT DO THEY SAY? YOU FINISH THIS PLAY WITH WHAT YOU THINK WOULD, COULD, SHOULD, OR MIGHT HAPPEN.

Fatso

Cast of Characters:
Terri: an honors student-who is also about 50 lbs. overweight.
Rheba: a young woman who lives in the apartment upstairs.
Sammy: Terri's baby brother

The Scene: About three o'clock on a Wednesday afternoon. The inside of a small apartment where Terri, her mother, and the baby live. You hear the key turn in the lock.

Terri opens the door, she slams down her school books,she switches on the lights, and walks angrilly over to the refrigerator. Terri rips off a note which is taped to the refrigerator door. She reads outloud.

Terri: 'Terri, I've been called into work again for Mrs. O'Brien. Sammy's at the baby sitter,she'll bring him home around 5:00. Warm up the macaroni and cheese in the blue casserole - bottom shelf. There are cookies on the top shelf of the cupboard, and ice cream in the freezer. I'll be back around 12:00 tonight. Love you, Mom.'

Terri *(thinking outloud)* : God! she always does this to me. SHEESH!

Terri opens up the kitchen cabinets, rummages around, takes out a bag of cookies, picks up the remote control for the television, slumps down in an arm chair. She clicks the television on, clicking around the stations looking for a program. She clicks the TV off.

Terri: Nothing but cartoons and commercials.

The doorbell rings, Terri stuffs the cookies under the arm chair with a guilty look

Terri (answering the door): Oh hi Rheba. Come on in!

Rheba: Hi Terri, I brought Sammy home- I'll put him in his play pen OK? There you go Sammy- here's your bottle. So, Terri- how are things going?

Terri: Oh, Rheba I don't know what to do, Mom's never here anymore- ever since she and Dad got separated she's had to work all the time. Today was the worst day of my life.

Rheba: What happened?

Terri: Well, today we had gym class- you know- and the teachers decided to put girls and boys together.

Rheba: What's so bad about that?

Terri: It was so embarrassing. I was bending over to pick up a volleyball, and my shorts split right in from of every body. All the kids were laughing at me. Then later on some one drew a picture of a pig with 'Fatso' written on it and stuck it on my locker for everyone to see! I can't go back to school tomorrow. What am I going to do?

WHAT DOES RHEBA SAY? YOU FINISH THIS PLAY WITH WHAT YOU THINK WOULD, COULD, SHOULD, OR MIGHT HAPPEN.

Pay Day

Cast of Characters:
Joe: a young man who works behind the counter at the local fast food restaurant.
Paul: his friend.

The Scene: A local fast food restaurant, it's a Saturday evening, just about closing time. Joe is sweeping up.

Paul enters through the back door

Paul: Almost ready?

Joe: Yeah, I've just got to finish wiping up the tables and then I'm ready to roll.

Paul: Great, get paid today?

Joe: Um, yes- got the check cashed and everything- two weeks of over time. I'm ready to PARTY.

Paul: Listen, Joe, I know this guy who'll let us have some really great(*ANGEL DUST, COCAINE, POT, you choose which drug they are talking about*) for cheap- how about it?

Joe: I don't know, I'm saving up for that bike- besides, you owe me, remember?

Paul: OK, OK- I'll pay you back, no problem.

Joe: Yeah, I've heard that one before. Well, that's finished, I'll grab my jacket- then freedom!

Joe goes out of the room, and quickly returns with his jacket.

Joe: Hey Paul, hold my jacket a minute will you? I forgot to punch out.

Joe goes out of the room again.. Paul looks at the cash register, and sees that it has been left open by mistake. Looking around he opens it all the way, and then quickly takes a few bills from the till, he closes the draw, and slips the money into his own pocket. Joe returns.

Joe: Free at last! Lets go.

Paul: Listen, you know that guy I was telling you about? We could stop by his place on the way back, I mean what's money? You can make it next week- overtime- you said you wanted to party, let's get high. What do you say?

WHAT DOES JOE SAY? YOU FINISH THIS PLAY WITH WHAT YOU THINK WOULD, COULD, SHOULD, OR MIGHT HAPPEN.

Information for teachers:

Where To Find Further Information

Among the very good books we can recommend are:

1. Life 101:Everything We Wish We Had Learned About Life In School-But Didn't by John-Roger & Peter McWilliams
2. 100 Ways to Enhance Self-Concept in the Classroom by Canfield & Wells
3. The Complete Juggler by Dave Finnigan
4. Co-dependent No More by Melody Beattie
5. Of Course You're Angry by Gayle Rosellini and Mark Worden
6. Juggling for the Complete Klutz by Cassidy & Rimbeaux
7. Heal Your Self Esteem: Recovery from Addictive Thinking by Robinson
8. Growing Up Drug Free ed. by U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. , Department of Education: 1-800-624-0100
9. What Works: Schools Without Drugs by U.S. Department of Education National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information PO Box 2345, Rockville, Maryland 20852
10. Ten Steps To Help Your Child Say "No": A Parent's Guide National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information PO Box 2345, Rockville, Maryland 20852
11. Love Your Fat Away by Aliza Guggenheim

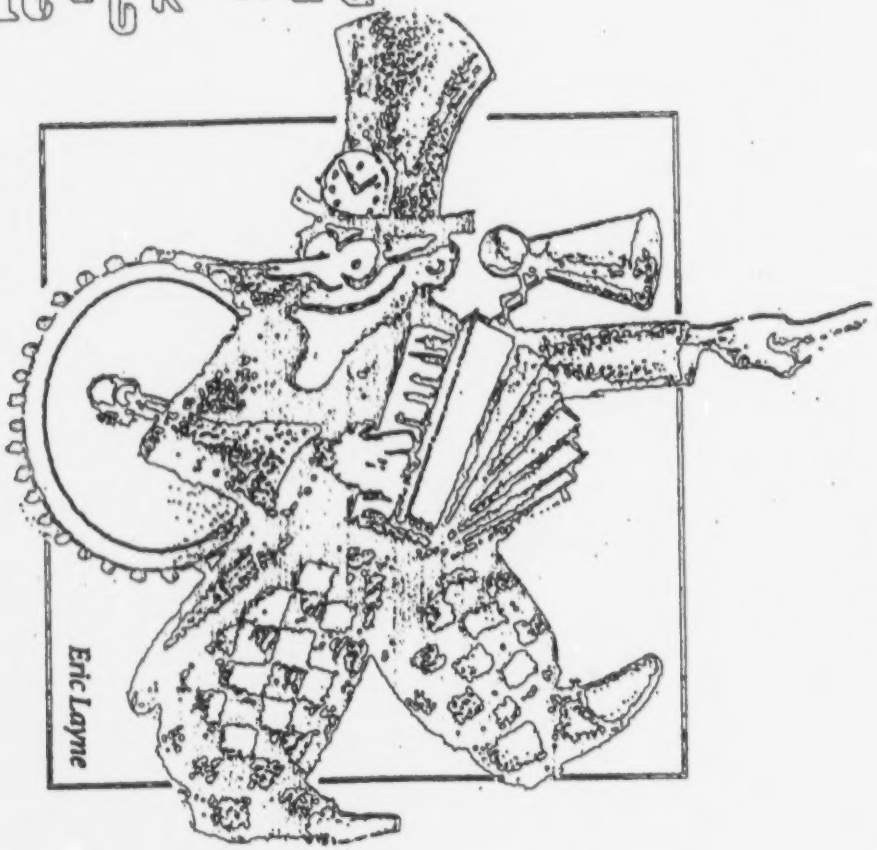
Organizations that my be helpful:

1. Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-a-non, Al-a-teen, Overeaters Anonymous: look in your local phone book, if you live in Maine you can call Ingraham Volunteers at 774-4357 or look up the calendar of meetings in the newspaper: 'New England JOURNEY' P.O. Box 10699, Portland, ME 04101 207-874-0064
2. D.A.R.E. Program, c/o Maine Criminal Justice Academy: 207-289-2788

Phone Numbers & Hot Lines:

1. National Institute on Drug Abuse: 1-800-662-4357
2. National Council on Alcoholism: 1-800-622-2255
3. Child Help USA: 1-800-422-4453
4. H.O.P.E. Eating Disorders Hot Line: 1-800-635-1022
5. National Runaway Switchboard: 1-800-621-4000
6. Cocaine Helpline 1-800-262-2463
7. KID NET 1 (For Parents who need help/support) 1-800-543-6381

Rick Adam



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- Mary Ann Burritt, Counselor,
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